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Chairman: Mr. Mbayu (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Cameroon)
later: Mr. Djuwala (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Indonesia)

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In the absence of Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal), Mr. Mbayu (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 95: Macroeconomic policy questions: (*continued*)

(c) Science and technology for development (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.3

1. **Mr. Ayari** (Tunisia), introducing the draft resolution entitled "World Summit on the Information Society", said that the success of the new economic order was largely dependent on creating an enabling environment for the development of infrastructure for technology and telecommunications. The two-phase Summit would reduce the technological gap between North and South. The draft resolution highlighted, inter alia, the urgent need to harness knowledge and technology for promoting the goals of the Millennium Declaration, recognized the pivotal role of the United Nations system in promoting development, invited Governments to participate actively in the preparations for the Summit, encouraged effective contributions from and active participation of all relevant United Nations bodies and invited the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established by the International Telecommunication Union. He hoped that all delegations would sponsor the draft.

Agenda item 100: International migration and development, including the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development to address migration issues (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.4

2. **Mr. Tootoonchian** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced the draft resolution entitled "International migration and development". International migration was a complex global phenomenon, which had both benefits and costs for all nations and which originated in poverty and underdevelopment. The draft was essentially based on the resolution adopted by the Committee on that subject two years previously, and the only substantial new element was paragraph 6. The draft also focused on the existing linkages among the social, economic, political and cultural factors related to international migration and development and recalled the commitment made at the Millennium Summit to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants. The Group of 77 and China hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

3. *Mr. Djumala (Indonesia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

Agenda item 103: Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (A/56/229 and Add.1 and Corr.1)

4. **Mr. Langmore** (Director, Division for Social mPolicy and Development), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (A/56/229 and Add.1, and Corr.1), said that the terrorist attacks on the United States and their consequences had clearly highlighted the importance of addressing not just the symptoms, but also the root causes of terrorism. The discussion of the report was therefore timely, since much more effective multilateral action was essential to tackle the poverty and powerlessness that bred frustration and despair. The report found that achieving poverty reduction and the other development targets set by the Millennium Summit would be difficult. Countries must focus on accelerating economic growth, improving the distribution of income and wealth and promoting social development, taking into account the multidimensional nature of poverty.

5. Increased external assistance was a necessary condition for poverty reduction in many countries. Undoubtedly, new and innovative resources were going to be required if sufficient resources were to be available to countries with high levels of poverty. The International Conference on Financing for Development was thus of crucial importance to achievement of the goal of reducing poverty.

6. The report also provided a brief summary of views on the proposal regarding the establishment of a world solidarity fund for poverty reduction. There had been broad support for the establishment of such a fund, provided it was financed through voluntary contributions and avoided duplication of activities of other United Nations funds and programmes.

7. The award of the Nobel Peace prize to the Secretary-General and the United Nations was both a recognition of the Secretary-General's work in conflict resolution and of his and the Organization's work in creating conditions which contributed to the reduction of conflicts. It was also a challenge to the entire international community to work even more effectively for reduction of the conditions which led to conflict, including the terrible level of poverty and inequity in the world.

8. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that poverty remained one of the major challenges facing humanity. It was shocking that a quarter of the world's population lived on less than $1 a day and that 80 per cent of the world's domestic product went to 20 per cent of the world's population. Poverty was a complex phenomenon which brought into play economic and social development issues. External obstacles included declining international resource flows, worsening terms of trade, the crushing external debt burden and shrinking official development assistance (ODA). The factors at the national level that accelerated poverty included weak and inadequate infrastructure and social services, rampant unemployment and wars and conflicts.

9. Those problems had been compounded by the forces of globalization, which had increased the vulnerability of many developing countries. Globalization had also widened the tremendous economic and technological gap between the developing and developed worlds. In that regard, while it would be difficult to achieve the Millennium Assembly's target for poverty reduction, it was imperative for the international community to vigorously pursue it at all levels by devising practical policies and mechanisms that were free from exclusive approaches and criteria. The international community should be very cognizant of the intricate relationship between poverty, peace and security. Indeed, poverty was the most pervasive violation of human rights and of the right to development.

10. Poverty eradication should be placed at the centre of national strategies and international cooperation. Indeed, in a highly interdependent world, national policies on poverty eradication needed to be supported by a helpful international environment. If progress towards the elimination of poverty remained slow in Africa, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the gap between that region and the rest of the world would widen significantly. In that regard, the Group of 77 and China hoped that the New African Initiative would make a substantive contribution and that the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty would take due account of that Initiative. In order to bridge the existing differences and to meet the agreed goal of halving poverty by 2015 in all developing countries, particular attention must be paid to accelerating pro-poor economic growth as well as social development.

11. While the bulk of financial resources must come from domestic savings, foreign capital represented an indispensable component. In that regard, politically tainted constraints on investment should be removed and countries should refrain from imposing severe restrictions on the access of developing countries to credit. Moreover, the international financial system needed to be reformed in order to reduce, inter alia, the excessive instability of capital flows and ensure the participation of developing countries in the decision-making of international financial institutions. ODA remained crucial in the fight against poverty. Developed countries were therefore urged to honour their commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of their GNP to ODA. Debt relief was a vital tool in support of developing countries' efforts to combat poverty and needed to be wider and deeper. He welcomed the proposed establishment of the world solidarity fund and hoped that a decision would be made during the current session of the General Assembly.

12. The expansion of international trade could also contribute to the promotion of economic growth and the eradication of poverty. Therefore, developed countries should remove trade barriers and subsidies, which seriously hampered access to their markets for the exports of developing countries. Turning to the role of technology, he noted that facilitating the transfer of technology to the developing world was critical to accelerating economic growth there. Given the serious threat of increasing technological marginalization of the South, including in the area of information and telecommunications technologies, urgent attention must be paid by the international community to the formulation and implementation of appropriate measures.

13. In conclusion, he noted that, while the Group of 77 and China appreciated the activities carried out thus far in support of national efforts to eradicate poverty, it believed that they should be continued and intensified.

14. **Mr. De Ruyt** (Belgium) spoke on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the other associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland, a European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area. He emphasized the importance, in the context of preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development, of the chapter on financial resources in the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/229 and Add.1 and Corr.1). Halfway through the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, more than a quarter of the world's population still had to survive on an income of less than one dollar a day. As the report confirmed, the objective of halving the proportion of poor people in the world by 2015 was attainable for most developing countries, but in about 50 others, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, a more sustained effort was required.

15. The European Union's policy on development assistance was making an important contribution. Given the links between poverty reduction and sustainable development, it believed the World Summits on Food and on Sustainable Development would help to place the fight against poverty higher on the global agenda. Globalization had strong potential for eradicating poverty, but it must be accompanied by national and international measures to extend its benefits to all. The European Union advocated four types of action. First, creation of an internal and external environment conducive to productive investment, featuring good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, transparency and accountability in public affairs, and involvement of citizens in decision-making. Second, faster economic growth to create opportunities for the poor, while promoting their access to land, education and microcredit, and combating gender inequality. Third, empowerment of the poor by removing social barriers, social exclusion and discrimination. Fourth, provision of safety nets to protect the poor from economic and humanitarian crises.

16. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was taking a disastrous toll on economic and social development, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and the problem of AIDS was a high priority for the European Union, to be addressed, inter alia, through the new Global AIDS and Health Fund.

17. Governments must formulate their own national strategies to combat poverty. The European Union encouraged the formulation and implementation of national policies, with involvement of the people concerned and of civil society organizations. It was endeavouring to strengthen planning capacity in the programme countries through technical assistance projects. In its integrated development policy, it relied on the poverty reduction strategy papers, which comprised quantified indicators, costed measures and a system for monitoring the impact of development programmes on poverty. It also welcomed the increased cooperation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in combating poverty in the poorest countries.

18. In the view of the European Union, financing for development would come primarily from domestic sources, but there was no substitute for ODA, especially for the least developed countries. The worldwide downward trend in ODA must be reversed so that all donor countries would meet the target of contributing 0.7 per cent of total ODA and 0.15-0.20 per cent of their gross national product as ODA. As for the important contribution made by debt relief, funds released in the 23 countries which had already reached the goal set in the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative amounted to 90 per cent of their spending on public health or 50 per cent of their spending on education. Access to basic services could be greatly improved by the steps outlined in the 20/20 Initiative.

19. The consultations requested in General Assembly resolution 55/210 had not generated any concrete or detailed proposals for the creation of a world solidarity fund. Before considering any formal decision on such a fund, the European Union wanted to be sure that it would not duplicate existing operations or compete for resources with existing United Nations funds and programmes. Other ways of promoting development financing could be discussed at the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development. The European Union would prefer to discuss advocacy for the Millennium Declaration as part of the preparatory process for the Conference.

20. Work on sustainable development and poverty eradication would help to counter fanaticism and restore the values of freedom and tolerance. For the

European Union, the Millennium Declaration target of halving the proportion of the world's population living on less than one dollar a day by 2015 was an absolute priority. The same priority featured in the Agreement signed in Cotonou in February 2000, which would link 77 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) to the European Union for 20 years. The Agreement was a model of North-South cooperation which would guide the Union in the preparatory work for the International Conference on Financing for Development.

21. **Mr. Gopinathan** (India) associated his delegation with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Poverty was many-faceted and must be tackled by a development strategy which combined economic growth with programmes targeted at specific categories of the population, including women and other vulnerable groups. The international community must create an environment supportive of national policies for development and poverty eradication. While global living standards had been rising, extreme poverty had still affected 23 per cent of the world's population in 1998, compared with 28 per cent in 1987, and the total number of poor people in the world remained constant, with 1.2 billion living on less than one dollar a day, and 2.8 billion on less than two dollars. His own region had 500 million people in the former group. Poverty eradication was a shared responsibility calling for a global strategy. Clear targets had already been set in the Millennium Declaration, and the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty should help to achieve them. The International Conference on Financing for Development should devise mechanisms to ensure the reliability and availability of development finance.

22. The discouraging record of the 1990s highlighted the need for multi-pronged action to ensure the availability of food, provide access to basic social services and enhance human capacity and opportunities for income generation. The international community had a crucial role to play in supporting human and institutional capacities, providing funds and transferring technologies to developing countries. The developing countries, in turn, should be able to participate in international economic decision-making. The developed countries must take steps to reverse the downward trend in ODA. If agreed ODA targets were met, an additional $100 billion a year would be released for development, compared with the $50 billion a year required to meet the goals set in the Millennium Declaration.

23. The poverty eradication strategy adopted in India focused on accelerating economic growth and providing basic services in both rural and urban areas, with a view to developing skills and generating self-employment among the poor. According to the Secretary-General's report (A/56/229), if future growth rates matched those of the 1990s, India would be able to meet the poverty eradication goals set in the Millennium Declaration. The national aim was to reduce poverty to 10 per cent of the population by 2012.

24. The United Nations had an important role to play in eradicating poverty, and should accord the highest priority to that and to development. His delegation supported the launch of the global poverty campaign, and the setting up of a world solidarity fund, both of which complemented international efforts to eradicate poverty.

25. **Mr. Kawaguchi** (Japan) noted that over 20 per cent of the world's population was still living in poverty. The international community must take concerted action to achieve the poverty eradication target set in the Millennium Declaration. A prerequisite for reducing poverty was political stability, so that it was important to resolve or prevent armed conflict, maintain social harmony and promote tolerance among different regional, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. It was also necessary to ensure the provision of basic health and education services and water supplies. Japan had been assisting efforts by developing countries to combat infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and had been supporting the work of non-governmental organizations in that area through measures such as grant aid for grass-roots projects. In 2000 it had allocated 25 per cent of its ODA to the social sector.

26. Robust economic growth through the private sector was another prerequisite for poverty eradication. The public sector should create an appropriate environment and respect initiatives taken by individuals and civil society. It should also pursue sound macroeconomic and industrial policies, establish regulatory frameworks which promoted business, and develop the necessary infrastructure, including energy and water supply, roads, railways, ports, airports and

telecommunications. In 1999 Japan had sent 885 specialists to developing countries to work on development planning and public administration, and had received 3,259 trainees in those fields from abroad; it had also provided $5.5 billion in grants and concessionary loans for economic infrastructure and production. Its assistance had contributed to reducing poverty to developing countries, especially in East Asia, and it would continue to support the efforts of developing countries, in line with the principle of "ownership and partnership" introduced by Japan at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD).

27. **Mr. Hidayat** (Indonesia), associating his delegation with the statement made by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, pointed out that the world's 1.2 billion poor people were condemned to short lives stunted by malnutrition, ill health and illiteracy. The persistence of such poverty in a world of abundance heightened the sense of those living in many developing countries that they were largely excluded from the benefits of globalization. Conflict and endemic diseases tended to thrive in regions where people were poor and uneducated, and inhibited both education and economic growth. The World Bank expected the economies of the poor countries to suffer more than the wealthier ones from the impact of the terrorist attacks of 11 September. According to the Bank, 10 million more people would fall below the poverty line in 2001, owing to the lack of safety nets.

28. The international community had taken numerous initiatives to combat poverty, including the global United Nations conferences of the 1990s. The work of the Bretton Woods institutions included the formulation of the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP). However, the results remained disappointing and the prospects of reaching the Millennium Declaration target by 2015 were extremely bleak. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development, if poor countries failed to achieve the target, that would be because of neglect of the rural poor, who comprised 75 per cent of the world's poor.

29. To meet the Millennium goal, there must be concerted action at the national, regional and international levels to integrate the developing countries into the world economy. At the national level, development policies and programmes aimed at the poor should include enhanced provision of public services and infrastructure, capacity-building and greater participation by the poor in decision-making on development.

30. Trade was a key engine of economic growth. However, according to the Secretary-General's report restrictions on market access continued to hamper the developing countries, in spite of a general reduction in trade barriers. His delegation therefore supported Recommendation 2 of the report. Trade in food and agriculture should be geared to fostering food security for all through a fair and just system. The forthcoming World Food Summit would be focusing on the contribution of the international community to that end. Priority should also be given to the recommendations in the report for additional development financing, especially in the form of ODA, as well as improved debt relief for the highly indebted poor countries, including low-income and middle-income developing countries bearing a heavy debt burden. His delegation also supported the proposal in the report for a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication. Those issues should be addressed by the International Conference on Financing for Development. For its part, the Government of Indonesia would continue its efforts to combat poverty at all levels.

31. **Ms. Zhang** Xiao'an (China) observed that, while the benefits of globalization had failed to reach the poor, its negative aspects had increased their numbers. Prolonged poverty and lack of development were the root cause of many serious international problems: armed conflicts, social upheaval, waves of refugees, the spread of HIV/AIDS, humanitarian crises and terrorism. A world in which over one billion lived in extreme poverty allowed for no optimism as to the goal of halving poverty by 2015. The huge economic impact of the terrorist attacks against the United States — an additional 10 millions persons in the developing countries would become poor in the next year as a result, according to World Bank estimates — only compounded the problem.

32. Since poverty eradication ultimately depended on development, countries should work together so that all could share in the benefits of globalization. Individual Governments should incorporate poverty eradication, as a matter of priority, into national economic and social development strategies, while mobilizing forces from all walks of life to participate. Meanwhile, the international community had to support the developing countries to the utmost, by increasing ODA to meet the

0.7-per cent target, by opening the markets of developed countries to the products of developing countries, by giving debt relief to the highly indebted poor countries and by resolving the indebtedness of middle-income developing countries. The agencies of the United Nations system should coordinate their work and mobilize all possible resources as they cooperated closely with the poverty eradication agencies in the recipient countries, tailoring United Nations projects to the wishes of the countries themselves and thus enhancing project performance and hastening the achievement of development goals.

33. **Ms. Campos** (Venezuela) said that the way to eradicate poverty was to guarantee every human being access to economic opportunities that created the means of livelihood and to ensure basic social services for the most disadvantaged. True peace in the world required justice, whose most authentic expression was social justice.

34. As globalization progressed, account had to be taken of the imbalances between levels of development when seeking effective ways of eradicating poverty. No nation was exempt from the scourge of poverty and therefore all nations had to mobilize to find a solution. One strategy would be to unblock the resources needed to finance sustainable development, using the occasion of the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development to further economic growth and reduce poverty.

35. However, poverty would never be alleviated as long as the developing countries remained so heavily indebted and unable to invest in their own development and as long as international trade was not opened up to them in a just and balanced way. Consequently, the developed countries must channel ODA generously to the cause of poverty reduction, especially in the least developed and landlocked countries.

36. Nations themselves must devise comprehensive poverty eradication strategies and national plans or programmes to attack the structural causes of poverty, setting accessible goals within realistic time frames. It would be useful to evaluate the impact on individuals of international and national poverty reduction programmes, and then deal with their negative consequences. Such assessments should be done periodically, as more information became available, to chart improvements in economic and social conditions. A review of the implementation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade would also be in order. It was incumbent on all involved in the struggle to endorse whatever action the United Nations proposed to eradicate poverty.

37. Venezuela, in order to deal with the problem of poverty, had given high priority to social problems and the particular situation of women, children, old people and other vulnerable groups, guaranteeing them special assistance. It wholeheartedly endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations for the reduction of poverty.

38. **Mr. Kolby** (Norway) observed that the objectives of the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty seemed unattainable for too many countries because of highly unfavourable growth rates, among other factors. An extraordinary effort would also be required by all partners in development to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Summit. The recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General pointed to several key areas where efforts must be increased. National development strategies, for instance, had to include clear targets for poverty reduction. Increased market access for all products was of the utmost importance for the developing countries; in that connection, Norway had decided to eliminate customs duties and quotas on all products, except arms, from the least developed countries. There was also a great need to find innovative ways of promoting investment in developing countries, especially the poorest ones, by both foreign and national investors. All donors should strive to increase ODA to the 0.7 per cent level: Norway itself would reach 0.9 per cent in 2002 and was aiming at 1 per cent. More adequate debt relief had to be given to the highly indebted poor countries. Furthermore, the international community should seize the occasion of the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development to agree on effective ways to mobilize resources for poverty eradication. In order to achieve the development goals of the Millennium Summit, the United Nations itself had to establish better coordination. The world solidarity fund for poverty eradication proposed by the Secretary-General should indeed not duplicate the work of existing aid institutions, from which scarce resources must not be diverted.

39. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States had reduced the prospects for achieving

the international community's goals, reinforcing a recession that had already begun in a number of countries. Millions more could fall into or remain in abject poverty as a result of the tragedy, and the worst hit area was likely to be Africa. The fight against terrorism was also a fight against poverty. All had a responsibility to prevent an even deeper recession with disastrous consequences for the poorest countries.

40. **Archbishop Martino** (Observer for the Holy See) said that human beings were at the centre of concerns for sustainable development; therefore, in respect of the eradication of poverty, the issue was the well-being of every human person and the lives of the hundreds of millions of people living in poverty. Despite the overall decrease in the proportion of people living in poverty, the actual number of people living in absolute poverty had not declined.

41. Governments were continuing the dialogue in the hope that a real and sustainable solution might be found. It was precisely that hope that strengthened the work of the Committee and of the entire United Nations system, and that allowed the people living in poverty to trust that the means for a better life would be found.

42. The Holy See welcomed the decision of the Commission for Social Development to review the progress made during the first United Nations Decade for the Eradi ıtion of Poverty. The report of the Secretary-Ge. ral must be read in conjunction with the report on *The World Social Situation, 2000,* which called attention to the importance of creating a more just society and appealed for greater economic harmony between the rich and the poor. In the view of the Holy See, the basis for sustainable development should be seen in a different light: to speak of economic development, social development and environmental protection no longer seemed to be sufficient in the light of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other devastating diseases, armed conflicts, the masses of refugees and displaced persons, and the inability to close the gaps in providing basic social services. Finding solutions would be difficult, but the search must continue.

43. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Morocco) observed that over a billion persons continued to live in extreme poverty, and that the international community had not yet found a way to use scientific and technological progress to help them. Although many parts of the world were on their way to meeting the 2015 poverty reduction target, sub-Saharan Africa, owing to its weak economic growth, had seen the numbers of its poor increase in the past decade. Many factors were responsible: the technological gap, an absence of viable basic infrastructures, the debt burden, a lack of foreign investment, low official development assistance and the ineffectual nature of measures taken to assist Africa.

44. Poverty had many dimensions. The multisectoral problems involved had to be dealt with in a comprehensive and integrated way by public authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society. That was the approach the African countries themselves had decided to take in dealing with poverty and development in general, in adopting the New African Initiative at the 37th ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity. They were determined to take charge of their own economic and social development and make poverty reduction the focus of their programmes of action. In its concern to help other African countries devote more resources to development, Morocco had announced that it would cancel the debt owed to it by the poor countries of Africa and allow free market access for their exports.

45. The battle against poverty was one of his Government's main priorities, with programmes targeted at the disadvantaged urban and rural populations. An agency for social development had been set up to combat poverty, with welcome outside assistance. Morocco would shortly be hosting an international forum on urban poverty, to consider ways of enabling vulnerable groups to benefit from globalization, and other related technological, financial, political and social themes.

46. Although Governments were primarily responsible for the development of their countries, the support of the international community and a favourable international climate played a role in the success of national poverty reduction strategies. The recommendations to that effect in the report of the Secretary-General deserved strong support. His delegation also favoured the establishment of a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication, which would complement the activities of existing bilateral, multilateral and international bodies. If the fund was to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, it

would be all the more important to secure contributions from foundations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society and international institutions. Such a fund was fully in keeping with the principle of solidarity and sharing of responsibility set out in the Millennium Declaration.

47. The struggle against poverty entailed opening up the markets of developed countries to exports from the developing countries. The debt of the developing countries must also be alleviated to release more funds for development and poverty reduction, without any lessening of ODA. Greater international economic cooperation, and improved coordination among international institutions and policies, in part through the forthcoming international conferences, would support the developing countries' struggle against poverty.

48. **Ms. Viotti** (Brazil) said that there was now a better appreciation of the multiple dimensions of the problem of poverty and of the virtues of sound macroeconomic policies, investment in human resources, protection of the vulnerable segments of the population, a healthy environment and public-private sector partnerships. It was also recognized that good governance at the domestic level, though a necessary condition, was not sufficient. Economic growth, a key factor in an effective strategy against poverty, required coherence between domestic policies and the international environment. Developing countries could achieve their full growth potential only if they were able to count on industrial markets for their exports and if they could supplement national resources with finance, investment and technology from abroad. Her country was committed to doing its part by focusing on the task of increasing domestic efforts while building an enabling international environment. For the period 2000-2003, her Government had launched a plan aimed at enhancing government transparency and efficiency. In that context, considerable progress had been achieved in the fields of education, health, food security and agrarian reform. The HIV/AIDS programme had made it possible to stabilize the epidemic and reduce hospitalization and AIDS-related deaths.

49. Domestic policies, in order to be fully successful, must rely on a supportive international environment. The downturn in economic activity in developed countries would have a serious impact on developing countries and their ability to meet their development goals. That made international cooperation even more essential and urgent. A fair world trading system had a key role to play in that regard. Trade liberalization, providing improved market access to the agricultural and manufactured products of developing countries, and elimination of export subsidies and remaining trade barriers were essential in order to enable developing countries to benefit to the full from their comparative advantages. Another matter of concern was instability in the international financial system. The developing countries must participate fully in the task of building a sound international financial system in the coming years.

50. Her country fully supported the Secretary-General's recommendation for a global campaign for poverty eradication within the framework of the Millennium Declaration and the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, together with his recommendation for the establishment of a world solidarity fund, which would demonstrate the genuine commitment of the United Nations system and of Member States to poverty eradication. The principles that would guide the management and use of resources and other related aspects of the operation of the fund should be discussed in depth by all Member States and defined no later than the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

51. In conclusion, she acknowledged the value of the assistance provided throughout the years by United Nations programmes and funds to the development and poverty-eradication efforts of the developing countries, and the need for adequate funding in order to ensure the sustainability of those efforts.

52. **Mr. Jalang'o** (Kenya) associated his delegation with the statement made by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and he said that, despite the enormous progress in science and technology, recent global trends on the containment of poverty remained a matter of great concern as about one quarter of the world's population still lived in abject poverty. Unlike other regions of the world where the incidence of poverty was falling, over 52 per cent of the population of Africa lived below the poverty line. The number of undernourished people had continued to increase while about one billion people in the world still had no access to clean drinking water. Maternal and infant mortality rates were still at their highest level, a situation that was compounded by the global

prevalence and spread of HIV/AIDS, especially among adults, where the disease was still on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa.

53. The Millennium Declaration set noble targets for the eradication of poverty but they would be difficult to achieve within the set time frames unless the present global economic system changed. The targets set at the World Food Summit in 1996 to reduce the world's poor by half by 2015 was already behind schedule. Improvement in the situation in sub-Saharan Africa depended on maintaining economic growth at higher levels and much would depend on progress in improving other indicators of poverty, including life expectancy, school enrolment and child mortality. Without progress in those areas, including containment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the gap between the African region and the rest of the world would continue to widen significantly. However, given the abundant natural resources of the subcontinent, the adverse socio-economic impacts of poverty and HIV/AIDS could be reversed if African governments displayed a willingness to address them resolutely.

54. Additional resources were needed to put in place the necessary infrastructure to stimulate increased economic activity in a globalized world. It would be possible to capitalize on domestic resources only if African economies were enlarged and incomes increased. As private capital flows were an unreliable source of development financing, it was important to improve the quantity and quality of ODA to developing countries.

55. The debt burden of many developing countries had constrained their ability to reduce poverty and attain development goals, in particular by adversely affecting budgetary allocations to essential services such as health and education. While his delegation appreciated and supported the efforts of development partners towards finding a durable solution to the debt crisis, including the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, it believed that much remained to be done to free developing countries from the debt burden.

56. In most of the developing countries, agriculture alone accounted for 80 per cent of total rural incomes and employment, making that sector an important starting point in poverty eradication. While those countries undertook the necessary reforms at the national level, genuine efforts were required from their trading partners in order to eliminate trade distortions and barriers with a view to improving market access for agricultural commodities from developing countries. The World Trade Organization should mainstream into its agenda such issues as poverty alleviation, financing for development and technology transfer.

57. The full implementation of the commitments agreed at past United Nations conferences and special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly should be the top priority of developing countries. Development resources must be provided on a predictable and continuous basis.

58. **Mr. Bwomono** (Uganda) said that the Secretary-General's report painted a mixed picture of how poverty reduction targets were being met, with sub-Saharan Africa lagging dramatically. Uganda, which had made the struggle against poverty one of its priorities, intended to overhaul its economic policies in order to favour the production of exports tailored to the needs of the people rather than those of industries abroad. The Government's poverty eradication programme, aimed at economic growth and equitable income distribution as well as the provision of basic services, sought to address issues of governance, trade liberalization and privatization; to focus on key areas such as agriculture and the informal sectors; to empower the disadvantaged, especially through gender mainstreaming; to improve the country's physical infrastructure and thus give access to markets; to ensure adequate levels of health care and education; to establish a poverty monitoring system; and to work with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other community-based organizations. In the process, Uganda had virtually assured universal primary education, with universal secondary education targeted for 2005. National microcredit and youth-credit schemes had been put in place, and access to basic health care had been much improved. Vigorous campaigns had reduced the rate of HIV/AIDS in the population.

59. Comprehensive strategies such as Uganda's should be supported by commitments at the major international conferences. Yet even so, the goal of halving poverty by the year 2015 hung in doubt. It needed to be recognized that poverty eradication was linked to debt relief and improved market access for the developing countries.

60. **Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa) noted that the overall progress in the reduction of poverty had been very slow and many developing countries were failing to meet development goals such as reducing infant mortality or lowering the proportion of people without access to clean water. The World Bank's preliminary projections of the impact on the world economy of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 indicated an unfavourable outlook for economic growth in developing countries, especially in the light of the current economic slowdown. The greatest impact of the situation would be borne by the most vulnerable economies, especially those in Africa, which risked being further marginalized. The exclusion of Africa from the benefits of globalization was clearly counterproductive for the maintenance of peace and stability on the continent.

61. The situation called for renewed concerted efforts by all, at both national and international levels, and there was a clear need to act on the commitments of the Millennium Summit and the Millennium Declaration. African countries had given serious thought to the problem of the huge disparities in development between North and South and the persistence of poverty and underdevelopment in their countries and had committed to the New African Initiative, a sustainable development programme whose objective was to eradicate poverty on the continent and to place African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development. In that connection, African Governments had pledged to work individually and collectively to promote the principles of peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management as well as regional cooperation and economic integration as preconditions for development.

62. The outcomes of the forthcoming international conferences and summits had an important bearing on the fight against poverty. It was therefore imperative to strengthen cooperation among all stakeholders, nationally and internationally, in order to ensure that those meetings delivered tangible solutions to the poor and contributed significantly to the fulfilment of international development goals. In order to increase world trade, it was important to guard against protectionism which would further marginalize developing countries, especially those in Africa, and the least developed countries in particular, which were currently not reaping the benefits of world trade, largely because of trade barriers, protectionism and lack of capacity. His delegation therefore called for a round of development-oriented trade talks focusing on trade as a tool for poverty eradication and development. It was important to ensure that the forthcoming International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held at Monterrey, Mexico, would focus on themes that were central to the economic development of all developing countries, including those on the African continent. The outcome of the Conference must set the stage for strengthened international cooperation for development and result in a renewed resolve to ensure the attainment of the agreed development targets.

63. The World Food Summit to be held shortly at Rimini, Italy, was a response to the realization that the goal of halving poverty by the year 2015 might not be reached without renewed international efforts. Hunger, from whatever cause, continued to be a major source of suffering across the globe and African countries faced a particular challenge in achieving sustainable food security. For the agricultural sector to play its role in that regard it must be supported through investments in infrastructure, adequate financing instruments, research and institutional and human development, in order to ensure an increase in productivity and promote market activity.

64. In keeping with the overarching goal of poverty eradication in the New African Initiative, the Southern African Development Community had proposed that the theme of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 should be "Poverty eradication as key to sustainable development". It was hoped that the Summit would reinvigorate the commitment of the international community to the goals of sustainable development and would also seek to address other dimensions of poverty such as access to water, energy, biodiversity, food security, desertification and land degradation.

65. In the past seven years, his own country had embarked on programmes aimed at socio-economic development in line with the objectives of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. Its economy was growing and it continued to play an increasing role in Africa and among the countries in the South as a partner with others in advancing the goals of democracy, human rights, peace and prosperity. There had been notable successes in many areas such as the provision of access to adequate

housing, medical care, fresh water, free primary education, basic social welfare grants, school feeding schemes and so forth. His Government was also continuing its efforts to promote the development of rural communities, to pay special attention to the needs of vulnerable groups such as rural women and children, and to provide training and capital to microenterprises and to promote other development programmes.

66. South Africa and the African continent as a whole had to contend with the catastrophe of HIV/AIDS against the background of pervasive poverty, underdevelopment and a range of other public health challenges. African countries would continue resolutely to address the huge challenges of disease, illiteracy, poverty, natural disasters and environmental degradation. Public-private sector cooperation and partnerships were critical to the development process. Great importance was also attached to cooperation with other countries and stakeholders at the regional, interregional and international levels, as well as with United Nations funds and programmes.

67. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's recommendation to the General Assembly to establish a world solidarity fund for the eradication of poverty and looked forward to a fruitful engagement with its partners on the modalities for putting it into effect.

68. **Ms. Enkhtsetseg** (Mongolia), associating her delegation with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that, unless adequate and urgent measures were taken globally, regionally and at the national level, the goals of the Millennium Declaration would remain largely unattainable for many developing countries. The Secretary-General's report also emphasized, however, that the goal of halving poverty was ambitious but not beyond reach. The main emphasis should be on trade, aid and the burden of debt. In all those areas, important pledges had been made but few had been translated into action.

69. Over the past 30 years, the number of least developed countries in the world had almost doubled and their share in the world's exports had declined by 40 per cent since 1980. As the hardships faced by the developing world increased, the level of ODA had been declining at an alarming rate. In order to overcome donor fatigue and enhance political support for an increase in ODA, it was essential that foreign assistance should promote domestic growth and sustained economic development, reduce long-term aid-dependence and result in the reorientation of aid programmes towards greater foreign investment inflows.

70. It was to be hoped that the International Conference on Financing for Development would provide an opportunity to reverse the declining trend in ODA and enhance the coherence and consistency of support for poverty eradication. It should give impetus to renewed cooperative efforts and a more robust multilateralism in the age of globalization.

71. Private financial flows could not replace ODA, particularly in the areas of social development and poverty reduction. That applied particularly to the most vulnerable developing countries, such as the least developed landlocked countries and small island countries, on which the forthcoming conference would be focusing.

72. While increasing trade liberalization offered opportunities, it inevitably entailed risks. New opportunities should be employed to ease the burden of poverty on the poorest countries and the risks should be addressed by the global community through cooperative efforts. The landlocked developing countries depended heavily on export-based sectors for funding their national efforts to reduce poverty. It was thus important that the interests and special needs of the landlocked developing countries were taken into account within the multilateral trade regimes. It was also important for landlocked and transit developing countries to engage in enhanced cooperation to facilitate transit transport and to maintain the momentum gained in recent years to provide technical and financial assistance to those efforts. Her delegation welcomed the fact that poverty reduction was defined as one of the major cross-cutting themes in the Secretary-General's road map for implementation of the Millennium Declaration and hoped that it would serve as a blueprint for specific and coordinated efforts by United Nations bodies to halve extreme poverty and bring new as well as existing programmes at both national and international levels under a broad umbrella to implement the millennium goals. The proposed world solidarity fund for poverty eradication could make a significant contribution to the achievement of those goals. The other important recommendations in the Secretary-General's report should be incorporated in the resolution on poverty

eradication to be adopted at the current session of the General Assembly.

73. Her Government had implemented a national poverty alleviation programme for 1996-2000, major components of which were national capacity-building, income-generating projects and short-term job creation through public works, with special emphasis on reducing rural poverty. One of the most important aspects of the poverty alleviation strategy being followed by her country had been efforts to make available more financial resources for the poorest groups through innovative microfinance initiatives.

74. In order to contribute to the attainment of the targets of the Millennium Declaration, her Government had recently adopted the good governance for human security programme which it was resolved to implement, together with its poverty alleviation component, in close cooperation with its bilateral and multilateral development partners.

75. If business were conducted in the same manner as in the past, between 50 and 70 developing countries would be unable to halve the levels of extreme poverty by the year 2015. It went without saying that adequate resources to eradicate world poverty were available; what was now required was a change of heart and a display of political will and shared responsibility.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.